

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 24, 2006. Claims 1 to 5 and 7 to 33 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 22, 23, 27, 28 and 31 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Before turning to the substantive merits of the Office Action, a procedural issue will be addressed. Specifically, paragraphs 6 through 10 of the Office Action (at pages 2 through 4) contain comments from the Examiner that some might interpret as slightly disparaging. For example, some might read these comments to imply (i) that the Amendment dated October 4, 2005 improperly did not comply with the rules, and (ii) that the Examiner might have taken a view of the invention and of the art that minimizes and marginalizes the importance of the invention. For example, with respect to item (i), paragraphs 6 and 7 state that there were only general allegations of patentability, and that there was no effort to "show how amendments avoid such references or objections". The Amendment has again been reviewed, and it is clear that there are much more than general allegations of patentability, in that the Amendment specifically and distinctly points out where claim language is not found in the cited art. Likewise, there was no need to "show how the amendments avoid such references or objections", since there were no amendments made to any of the claims.

With respect to item (ii), paragraphs 8 and 9 refer to language such as "Alice and Bob", which is not found in the art applied against the claims, and which

possibly might signify to some that the Examiner might have minimized or marginalized the importance of the invention.

These points were discussed with the Examiner in a telephone conversation on February 28, 2006. With respect to item (i), all agreed that the Amendment was fully responsive to the Examiner's rejection, complied fully with the rules, and contained much more than mere general allegations of patentability. With respect to item (ii), the Examiner stated that references to "Alice and Bob" are common in this technological field of encryption, but the Supervisor stated that it would have been better for the Examiner to have confined his comments to the content of the applied art, or to supply a reference of record that shows use of this terminology. It was further agreed that the comments at paragraphs 6 through 10 would be withdrawn upon a written request to do so, which is the reason for this writing.

The prosecution of this application has proceeded with the utmost professionalism on the part of both the patent Applicants herein and on the part of the USPTO Patent Examiners. There is justifiable concern, however, as explained above that the public at large might not understand this and might take a different view that was simply not intended. The incident, and the request for relief, is therefore regretted.

Turning to the merits of the Office Action, a drawing objection was lodged against amended Figure 7 for failure to label both of blocks 92 as "decryption algorithm". A replacement drawing sheet for Figure 7 accompanies this Amendment, to attend to this.

Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent 6,971,007 (Currans). Claim 34 has been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding the correctness of the rejection.

The remaining claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over one or more of the following: U.S. Patent 6,711,677 (Wiegley), U.S. Patent 5,953,419 (Lohstroh), U.S. Patent 6,470,450 (Langford), or U.S. Patent 6,473,508 (Young). Thus, with respect to the independent claims, Claims 1 and 27 were rejected under § 103(a) over Wiegley, Claim 22 was rejected over Wiegley in view of Lohstroh, Claim 23 was rejected over Wiegley in view of Langford, and Claims 28 and 31 were rejected over Wiegley in view of Young. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, including those of the dependent claims, are respectfully requested as explained in more detail below.

The invention concerns secure storage of a public key for encryption of data in a computing device that includes a user-specific key pair that is securely stored in the computing device. A target public key is received corresponding to a target device, and a user-specific key pair is obtained from a secure registry. The user-specific key pair includes a user-specific private key and a user-specific public key. The user-specific private key is utilized to create a target key verifier based on the target public key. The target key verifier is stored together with a target public key in a storage area.

According to one feature of the invention, a printing instruction is recognized, such as a printing instruction that originated from a user. In response to recognition of the printing instruction, there is a verification, in which a user-specific public key is applied to the target key verifier for verifying authenticity of the target public

key. Data is encrypted in the case that authenticity of the target public key is verified, thereby creating encrypted data for transmission to the target device.

Accordingly, it is a feature of the invention that authenticity of a target public key is verified, such as by application of a user-specific public key from a user-specific key pair to a target key verifier.

It is a further feature of the invention that verification occurs in response to recognition of a printing instruction.

Applicants maintain their position that the Office Action has drawn unwarranted conclusions from the art of record, specifically from Wiegley, based on broad speculation and inferences not supported by art-based evidence. It is respectfully submitted, for example, that Wiegley's verification of a session ID is different from that set out in the claims herein. Specifically, according to the claims, verification according to the invention is to verify whether or not the public key has been modified in order to confirm that the public key is safe to use. Accordingly, the disclosure of Wiegley, and his use of a verification process, is fully different from the purposes and structures of the invention, particularly as regards verification according to the invention.

Moreover, nothing in the applied art is seen to disclose or to suggest that the verification is responsive to a recognition of a printing instruction, as set out in the amendments above. Applicants have studied the art for the purposes of discerning whether it provides a detailed explanation of timing for its various processes. In Figure 4 of Young, for example, there are descriptions of applying an electronic signature to data before a sending process, and a verifying at the receiver side that data received from a sender side

has not been modified. Such a description does not at all describe the invention set out herein, in which verification is responsive to recognition of a printing instruction.

In the rejection of independent Claims 28 and 31, which have not been amended, the Office Action took the position that Wiegley describes recognition of a printing instruction, and that Young describes verification in response to recognition of a printing instruction. Applicants respectfully disagree with these assertions. In support of the view of that Wiegley describes recognition of a printing instruction, the Office Action cited to column 2, lines 40 to 56. This portion of Wiegley has been reviewed extensively, but it says nothing concerning the recognition of a printing instruction. Furthermore, it says nothing concerning the timing of a printing instruction, or the recognition thereof, relative to the timing of a verification step. Likewise, Young has been reviewed, particularly lines 22 to 36 of column 9, which the Office Action asserted to show verification in response to recognition of a printing instruction. Like Wiegley, however, Young says nothing concerning the recognition of a printing instruction, and Young says nothing concerning the timing of a printing instruction, or its recognition, relative to the timing of a verification step.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claims herein would not have been obvious from any permissible combination of the applied art, and withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejections is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised in the Office action, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael K. O'Neill", written over a horizontal line.

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